

■ Office of the Chief Information Officer

Effective August 1996, the Information Technology Management Reform Act (ITMRA) of 1996, subsequently renamed the Clinger-Cohen Act, required that each executive agency designate a Chief Information Officer (CIO) who reports directly to the head of the Agency and who has information resources management duties as the official's primary duty.

In compliance with Clinger-Cohen requirements, the Secretary of Agriculture designated a CIO and established the supporting organizational structure, the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) at USDA. The OCIO is independent of any other Agency. The CIO has primary responsibility for supervising and coordinating the design, acquisition, maintenance, use, and disposal of information technology by USDA agencies, and for monitoring the performance of USDA's information programs and activities.

The OCIO is composed of an information resources management (IRM) policy staff and an operations staff known as the National Information Technology Center (NITC). NITC provides information management and telecommunications services, technology, and expertise to support the mission and programs of USDA, its agencies, and a growing list of external customers. NITC systems supporting major USDA programs include the Dedicated Loan Origination Servicing System, National Data Bank for Food Stamps, Weather Information Management System, Timber Sales, and the Residue Violation Information System. NITC's centralized mainframe and client server computing facilities serve over 40,000 end users in more than 4,000 locations nationwide.